

1909

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF WIGTON.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

Medical Officer of Health.

FEBRUARY, 1910.

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HILL HOUSE, WIGTON,

2nd February, 1910.

THE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF WIGTON.

GENTLEMEN,

The vital statistics for the year 1909 show that the death-rate is somewhat higher than the rates for the three immediately preceding years, although the nett death-rate is slightly below the average of the decade 1899-1908.

The total number of deaths registered in the district is 77, which upon an estimated population of 3,480 works out to a mortality of 22·1 per thousand per annum of the population ; as however 24 of these deaths occurred in the Work-house, 15 of which were of persons belonging to places outside the district, it is necessary to deduct the latter number from 77, and, as a resident died in a public institution outside the district, to add this death, thus bringing the number of deaths of residents down to 63, and the nett mortality to 18·1.

The average rate for the preceding ten years is 18·6, and the rate for England and Wales for 1908 is 15·8.

The higher mortality of our district appears to be due in a measure to the higher average age of the residents. Out of 63 deaths, 28 were of persons over the age of 65 years.

We may congratulate ourselves that we have not had a death from infectious disease during the year.

Infant Mortality.—Eleven deaths of infants under the age of one year were registered, equal to a mortality of 132·5 per thousand births.

The average number of deaths for the last ten years is 13·6, and the average rate is 145 per thousand births.

The rate is unduly influenced by the death of four infants under the age of three weeks, two of which were twins, from debility at birth.

Tuberculosis Death-Rate.—Nine deaths were due to tuberculous diseases against six in 1908, equal to a death-rate of 2·5 per thousand per annum. The rate for the county in 1908 was 1·5. The number of very poor amongst the inhabitants with the attendant overcrowding and bad sanitary conditions is no doubt accountable for this high death-rate, together with the house construction mentioned below.

In known cases of phthisis, instructions are given to prevent infection of others, and where death takes place disinfection is carried out by your Inspector. The hand-bills of instructions you have provided will greatly assist.

Birth Rate.—The number of births registered is nine below 1908 and 10 below the average of the last ten years, viz., 83, or a birth-rate of 23·8 per thousand of the population. The average for the decade 1899-1908 is 25·7.

The rate for England and Wales for 1908 is 26·5.

Ten cases of infectious disease were notified during the year, viz., six of scarlet fever and four of erysipelas; of the former one was notified in January, two in June, and three in December, the last-named residing in one house. The cases of erysipelas were sporadic.

I would again remind you of the need for an isolation hospital for infectious diseases.

Five cases of pulmonary tuberculosis have been notified under the Public Health (Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1908.

We have no other system of notification of phthisis.

The water supply continues to be pure, sufficient in quantity, and free from risks of pollution.

As mentioned in previous reports the house accommodation is for the most part satisfactory, but the construction of a certain number, some of which are back to back, is certainly defective from a sanitary point of view, owing to imperfect ventilation and lack of air space and sunlight about the houses.

I have visited the Dairies and Cow Sheds in company with your Inspector, and have found them, for the most part, clean and well drained, but better ventilation and more air space in the Cow Sheds is desirable in most cases.

There are seven Slaughter Houses in the district, which I have visited during the year, and which are systematically visited by your Inspector, occasionally at the time of slaughtering. They are well drained and ventilated, and kept clean ; the offal being promptly removed.

We have no inspector with a special certificate in meat inspection.

No carcasses, or parts of carcasses, have been found to be tuberculous.

Frequent inspections of the common Lodging Houses are made. They are regularly whitewashed, kept clean, and ventilated, and free from overcrowding.

The sewerage of the district is in good order, the sewers being well maintained and regularly flushed, their contents being screened at the outfall and treated by broad irrigation which produces a satisfactory effluent discharging into the river Waver.

The water carriage system of excrement disposal is universally employed.

House refuse is removed weekly by the public scavengers.

The Medical Inspection of School Children is carried out by the County School Medical Officer.

I have visited the Factories and Workshops in company with your Inspector, and found them in a satisfactory state with the exception of the illegal occupation of an underground Bakehouse, now under the consideration of the Council.

I enclose Tables of Statistics Nos. I., III., IV, and V., with Form 572 Factory and Workshop Act, 1901.

I am,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

J. BLACKLOCK.

